WebBuyer

SITE REVIEWS FOR ONLINE SHOPPING

BY KEVIN SAVETZ

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<Tech Shopping

accessmicro.com

Access Micro stocks tons of items ranging from broadband routers to complete desktop systems. The help desk and hardware guide provide aid to first-time visitors, and the clearance area offers returned items and old inventory for below wholesale cost.

allcables.com

Plug it in and hook it up at **AllCables,** which sells fiber-optic cables, IEEE 1394 (FireWire) cables, printer cables, power cables—cables of every description. Most include a lifetime replacement warranty.

allstarshop.com

The **Allstar Microelectronics** catalog of PC accessories includes graphics cards, motherboards, and peripherals. The selection in some categories is modest, but prices are reasonable, and you'll find an ample amount of information about each product.

batteriesdirect.com

Empower yourself! **Batteries Direct** sells batteries for laptops, camcorders, and portable phones, as well as AC adapters for portable computers. If the kids' toys are running on empty, check out the selection of rechargeable nickel-metal-hydride batteries in sizes ranging from AAA to D.

blackbox.com

Get connected! Specializing in network products, **Black Box's** extensive catalog of storage, cabling, and surge-protection products—plus many other connectivity accessories—can be viewed online or off.

buycase.com

Banish the boring beige box forever! **Colorcase** offers more than 60 unusual computer cases, including translucent-plastic, aluminum, mirrored, and "character" cases. (Be sure to check out the doggy- and kitty-shaped cases.)

buydig.com

A site for shovels and trowels? No, **BuyDig.Com** offers digital tools and gadgets including digital cameras, fax machines, PDAs, DVD players, and video-capture devices.

www.buyuptime.com

BuyUptime.com's protection and security inventory includes uninterruptible power supplies and accessories, batteries, and power-distribution units. The selection ranges from simple surge protectors to industrial transformers.

cablemax.com

CableMax will get you more wired than a double-strength espresso. The company manufactures and sells cables of all types. In addition to computer and bulk cable, the site sells networking products, adapters, tools, and test equipment.

cablestogo.com

Cables To Go sells every conceivable cable you might need for your PC, from standard SCSI to esoteric system-specific cables. You'll also find networking products, bulk cable, tools, and test equipment. You might even get lucky and snatch up what you need at a bargain price in the site's closeout section.

JANUARY

COMPUTER SHOPPER site OF THE month

buy.com

With its beyond-vast, million-product selection, **Buy.com** has long been a favorite with *Computer Shopper* readers. A recent site redesign coupled with some new features make it well worth a fresh visit. The inventory includes computer hardware, software, electronics, video games, books, music, and DVDs. In every area, shoppers will find uncluttered, informative pages that make choosing the right peripheral a painless task.

The site's new High End Storage store goes beyond typical hard drives and media by adding tape-backup hardware, network-attached storage servers, RAID drives, optical drives, and backup software. In the Wireless area, you'll find cellular phones and calling plans, PDAs, and wireless e-mail gadgets.

Buy.com's gift center makes giving presents as easy as getting them. Given just a bit of information about the recipient's tastes, the Gift Suggestions feature doles out eerily accurate book, music, game, and video ideas. Wish Lists let you share your own desires with friends and family.

Bargain shoppers will want to check out the Price Mistake of the Day, a real bargain that, with tongue in cheek, pokes fun at online merchants' pricing gaffes. The company's low-price guarantee promises to match competitors' prices, but the guarantee only applies to a few "qualified" online retailers.

SITE REVIEWS

www.cd-recordable.com

The U.S-owned and -based **CD-Recordable Factory Store** actually manufactures the discs it sells. This easy-to-navigate site stocks a massive variety of CD-R discs, including colorless and tinted media, plus disc-packaging and -storage accessories.

cdw.com

CDW offers an enormous array of hardware and software for business. Create side-by-side comparisons in many product categories, and search out dollar-saving deals on the rebates-and-coupons page.

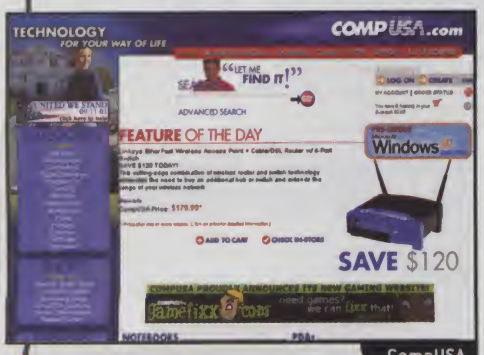
Circo Technology

circotech.com

If a beautiful PC case stops you in your tracks, visit **Circo Technology,** which offers a large selection of attractive and functional cases. For the maximum in upgradability, check out the roomy "cube" cases.

compgeeks.com

Revenge of the nerds, indeed! Shop the **Computer Geeks Discount Outlet** for new, discontinued, and refurbished computer gear. It's a trove for the do-it-yourselfer piecing together a desktop system. The site features low prices and complete specs on every product.



CompUSA

compusa.com

The well-organized **CompUSA** rounds out the usual selection of PC hardware, peripherals, and accessories with areas devoted to electronics and gadgets. The frugal won't want to overlook the site's outlet section.

computergate.com

Computer Gate promises a 30-day satisfaction return policy on its products, which include peripherals and build-to-order PCs. Check out the Quick Index: You'll never have to poke around for the right product again.

computers4sure.com

In the 19 well-stocked departments at **Computers-4Sure.com** you'll find a broad spectrum of products, including networking equipment, PDAs, and scanners. Bargain hunters can quickly sniff out deals on the Clearance pages.

computersurplusoutlet.com

You're just crazy enough to build your own desktop system, aren't you? Then you'll feel right at home at **Computer Surplus Outlet,** where you'll find closeouts, overstocks, refurbished equipment, and liquidation items. You might even stumble on an assembly-required Pentium system for less than $100.

crucial.com

One of the largest providers of memory upgrades on the Web, **Crucial Technology** offers free shipping on RAM for 11,000 computer systems. The company backs its memory with a lifetime warranty.

c-source.com

The catalog at decade-old **CompSource** includes a full range of PC products—nearly 200,000 in all. The company promises same-day shipping, but watch out for the 15 percent fee on returns.

dalco.com

Dalco Electronics stocks everything from motherboards to monitors. If you're a bargain hunter, start with the specials found on the home page. You'll also find a helpful motherboard/CPU and memory configurator.

dartek.com

Dartek sells a remarkable selection of hardware, software, networking equipment, and office furniture. Well-designed features include printable spec sheets, customers' product ratings, a product-watch feature, and a frequent-buyers' club.

directron.com

Specializing in computer peripherals, **Directron.com** offers low prices on a wide variety of name-brand and OEM products. Most items include a 30-day guarantee, and any order earns you the right to pick through the Free Stuff bin. Savvy savers will appreciate the Clearance area, as well as frequent-customer and volume-purchasing discounts.

dirtcheapdrives.com

If you can store data on it, this site sells it. **Dirt Cheap Drives** offers hard drives, CD-ROM and DVD hardware, and drive arrays, with detailed technical information about each product. This decade-old company also stocks mounting kits, media, and accessories.

ecost.com

The **eCost.com** catalog spans the full range of PC hardware and software, including ready-to-use systems, peripherals, accessories, and applications. The Bargain Countdown will tempt you with time-limited deals.

emscomputing.com

EMS Computing offers a 40,000-product catalog, an easy-to-navigate site, and low shipping charges. A monthly newsletter delivers informative tips on choosing and using computer accessories.

euclidcomputers.com

Euclid Computers stocks laptops from eight manufacturers, PDAs from seven, and a smattering of wireless accessories and GPS receivers. Use the filter tool to hone your laptop choice by CPU speed, screen size, and weight.

www.freecolorprinters.com

It's not a scam—"qualified organizations" can indeed apply for free color printers at **FreeColorPrinters,** a subsidiary of Xerox. You'll need to commit to printing a certain number of pages per month and buy your supplies directly from Xerox. See the site for more details.

fwdepot.com

Catering to both Mac and PC users, **FireWire Depot** sells IEEE 1394 drives, cables, repeaters, and upgrade cards. You can buy an empty enclosure, then populate it with your own drive—online assembly instructions show you how.

Googlegear

googlegear.com

Targeting corporations and smaller businesses, **Googlegear** sells a tempting selection of PC systems, hardware, and software. Check out the savings in the Open Box Shop and the miserly $1 Marketplace.

handspring.com

Get a **Handspring** PDA direct from the source. The site sells Visor handhelds, add-on modules, accessories, and software.

harddrive.com

Pack rat? **HardDrive.com** has your storage solution. Choosy shoppers will find extensive choices in IDE, SCSI, and IEEE 1394 (FireWire) drives, along with

other peripherals. For fashion-forward computer users, the site offers an array of black PC components, from cases to scanners. After all, black *does* go with everything.

hypermicro.com

Hyper Microsystems specializes in storage. The catalog includes CD-ROM and CD-RW drives, tape backup drives, hard drives, and RAID adapters. Check the Hyper Bundles for ready-to-use RAID and CD-RW starter kits.

igo.com

iGo bills itself as a "mobile technology outfitter." Use the site to outfit your cell phone, notebook, or PDA with chargers, batteries, and other necessary accessories. The iGo Alerts feature delivers free customized news to your portable device.

inkfarm.com

We're not sure what type of farm printer ink comes from, but we do know that **Inkfarm.com** sells ink and toner with flat-rate shipping. Go with "official" OEM ink or opt to save big bucks with aftermarket ink that often costs about half the price.

insight.com

With more than 110,000 items for sale, **Insight** offers an impressive catalog of hardware and software. Customized sites are available for shoppers in the United States, Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

jandr.com

Hardware, software, home-office products, and appliances abound at **J&R Computer World,** the New York City-based superstore famed for its selection and, ahem, "brusque" service. Avoid the attitude with this online version, which specializes in cameras, both digital and traditional film models. Product help is available via e-mail, online chat, and phone.

kidstation.com

The family computer shouldn't be a pain for children to use. The main attractions at **Kidstation** are ergonomic mice, keyboards, and computer furniture designed with the little ones in mind. But you'll also find fun and educational kid-centric software.

lanblvd.com

Wrestling with your old router? Network card not working? **LanBlvd.com** specializes in networking products. You'll find hubs, routers, interface cards, and wireless stations, along with other essentials for your LAN.

laptoptravel.com

Laptop Travel is road-warrior heaven! The site sells portable-computing and international-travel gear, including electrical adapters, modem converters/couplers, and securityaccessories. You'll find traditional and "camouflaged" laptop carrying cases, laptop RAM, and storage add-ons.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BILL RIESER

www.mediastore.com

Burn, label, and store discs with a little help from **MediaStore.** The site sells CD-R, CD-RW, DVD-R, and DVD-RW discs, as well as drives, software, labelers, and media-packaging material. If burning audio CDs is your thing, visit the site's MP3 section.

megahaus.com

MegaHaus' catalog of "everything high-tech" offers a full spectrum of products, from mice to monitors. The site specializes in storage, including hard drives, RAID solutions, and CD recorders.

mei-microcenter.com

MEI-Micro Center offers new and refurbished desktops from Compaq, eMachines, Hewlett-Packard, and PowerSpec. You'll also find a decent selection of peripherals. Rummage through the bargain bin for deals on closeouts, refurbished units, and overstocks.

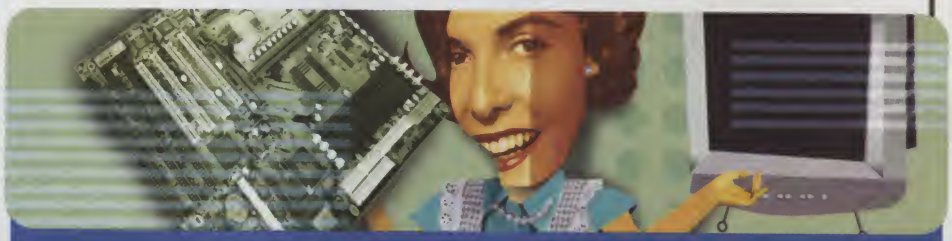
SITE REVIEWS

memman.com

Desktop and laptop memory sold at **Memory Man** carries a lifetime warranty, and the site's reference guide offers RAM-configuration info for all brand-name computers.

memory4less.com

Memory4Less.com offers low prices on a wide variety of RAM. Don't know the memory requirements of your computer or digital camera? The site will clue you in.



Motherboards

aberdeeninc.com

Targeting savvy consumers, **Aberdeen** features extensive specs on a wide variety of peripherals and accessories. The site's catalog of motherboards spans 10 major manufacturers and includes a side-by-side comparison tool.

motherboardexpress.com

Don't be overwhelmed by **Motherboard Express'** array of more than 100 boards. The site's search engine will filter the choices by processor type, onboard controller, chipset, case type, or number of CPUs. Save money with a motherboard/processor bundle.

motherboards.com

In addition to a wide selection of motherboards, with copious technical specs on each, **Motherboards.com** serves up honest reviews from picky system shoppers just like you. Order a motherboard and CPU together, and the company will configure and test them for you.

motherboards.org

Motherboards.org is packed with motherboard news, reviews, specifications, and tips. Its comprehensive database of 1,400 products includes driver information, technical details, and overclocking hints.

www.motherboardsdirect.com

Motherboards Direct serves up a fair selection of boards, plus cases, CPUs, and peripherals. Upgrade your system while reaping additional savings with a CPU, motherboard, and case combo deal.

sharkyextreme.com

Written with the hardware enthusiast in mind, **Sharky Extreme** doles out persnickety motherboard reviews, a CPU price-tracking tool, and active hardware-discussion forums. Kick your PC up another notch after reading the site's graphics-card reviews and guides to benchmarking.

tccomputers.com

In business since 1988, **TC Computers** sells fully configured systems, motherboards, and peripherals. The company's specialty is motherboards: Buyers can choose to have boards and processors preassembled and tested at no additional charge.

SITE REVIEWS

mobileplanet.com

MobilePlanet is home to a gaggle of high-tech tools and toys for mobile professionals. The selection includes notebooks, PDAs, wireless communication products, and travel-size printers and scanners.

monitorexpress.com

Monitor Express sells 500 models of new monitors, plus money-saving refurbished ones. The catalog also includes monitor cables, video adapters, and screen filters.

monitoroutlet.com

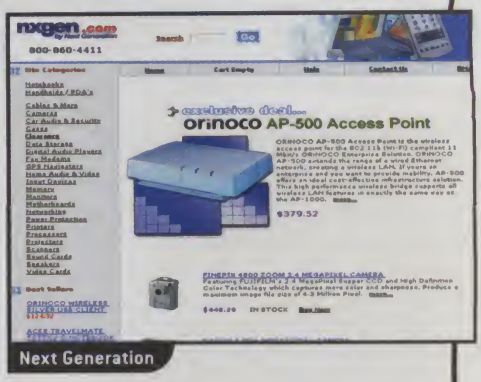
From inexpensive 14-inchers to elegant and pricey flat-panel LCDs, **Monitor Outlet** proffers a wide range of displays. The site sells units from 24 manufacturers, plus specialty monitors such as touch screens, wide-aspect-ratio units, and projectors.

newegg.com

You won't have to shell out big bucks or scramble for hardware at **NewEgg.com**. Peck at the site's listings of new products and top sellers, then take a crack at the specials. Order carefully—the 15 percent restocking fee might make you squawk.

nxgen.com

Next Generation's Web site is densely packed with prebuilt computers and peripherals ranging from cables to graphics cards. The selection is huge, and the site provides full specs and plenty of details about each product.



Next Generation

PC-Maintenance and Tech-Support Sites

expertcity.com

Expertcity promises live, 24-hour computer assistance from real human beings. When you pose a question, experts bid for your business. Read guru profiles, compare prices, and choose the expert you like best. Most question fees range from $5 to $20, and you only pay if you are satisfied with the help you receive.

ibackup.com

Keep an offsite backup of your important files with **IBackup.** This service allows for scheduled, encrypted backups from Windows, Mac OS X, and Linux systems. The cost depends on the amount of storage space you need, starting at $3 a month for 50MB. A free trial is available.

mcafee.com/myapps

McAfee VirusScan Online is a subscription service that delivers antivirus tools to protect your PC. The package includes a virus shield, a virus scanner, and the ability to create a system rescue disk. The service costs $24.95 per year.

www.pandasoftware.com/activescan

How about a free, Web-based scanner that will inspect your PC for 60,000 viruses, Trojan horses, and other nefarious applications? That's **Panda ActiveScan.** The service requires a Windows-based PC running Microsoft Internet Explorer.

pcpinpoint.com

PC Pinpoint is Web-based computer diagnostic and repair service. It tests your hardware and software, and will alert you if something is askew. The service, which costs $14.95 for one week or $49.95 per year, includes self-help tutorials and telephone technical support.

techtracker.com

Does keeping up with software upgrades drive you batty? **TechTracker Desktop** can help. This free service compares the software on your computer with the latest versions available and notifies you when your applications need to be updated.

xdrive.com

For online backup or simply moving files between home and work PCs, forget floppies and try **Xdrive.** The service's online storage space looks like a regular disk drive to your computer, so you can access it *in Windows Explorer.* A subscription costs from $4.95 per month for 25MB of space.

1coolpc.com

A cool computer is a happy computer. **1CoolPC** specializes in fans, heat sinks, and other cooling devices for your CPU, graphics card, monitor, hard drive, and other components that tend to swelter.

outpost.com

Outpost.com sells around 170,000 products—a full range of computer hardware, plus cameras, electronics, and innovative specialty products from partner companies.

palmgear.com

Users of handhelds will appreciate the extensive selection of free and commercial programs downloadable from **PalmGear.com.** You can buy PDA hardware and accessories, or sign up for an e-mailing list to receive information about new software, news, and user tips.

pcconnection.com

PC Connection offers bargains on a colossal variety of PC and Macintosh products. Smart Selectors ease the search process for those looking for turnkey systems, cameras, printers, monitors, or memory to fit specific guidelines.

www.pcliquidator.com

The getting's good at **PC Liquidator,** a site that offers clearance, refurbished, and overstocked hardware and software. The inventory is always changing and usually inexpensive. You can find many hardware choices for under $10—and software for 99 cents.

pcmall.com

Shoppers at **PC Mall** receive free lifetime technical support on the site's vast selection of computers, hardware, and software. The site's business-solutions forum offers corporate leasing and volume pricing. Apple-heads can find all their favorite Macintosh products at the **Mac Mall** sister site ***(www.macmall.com)***.

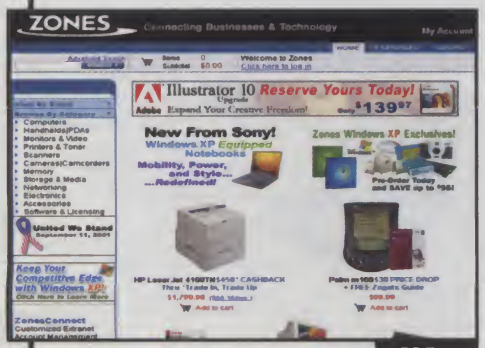
pcnation.com

You'll pledge allegiance to **PCNation** after seeing its catalog of 70,000 hardware, software, and

networking products. The home page offers links to "best buys" and to products with special rebates.

pczone.com

PC Zone stocks an impressive selection of all things PC. You'll find links to a clearance area and other stores: **Mac Zone** and **Electronics Zone.** Printable rebate coupons can save you some cash.



PC Zone

www.pdaorder.com

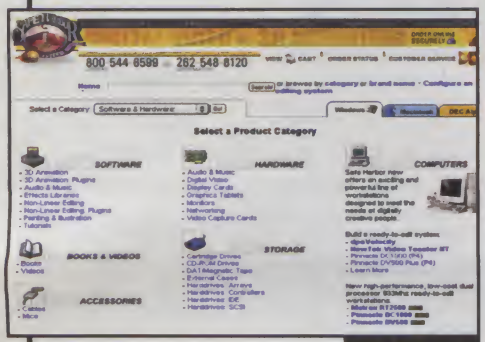
PDAOrder sells personal digital assistants preloaded with the software you need. Bundles include programs for physicians, professionals, financial mavens, and college students. The site also offers reviews, feature articles, and how-to guides.

www.sg3d.com

Sunway Graphics specializes in PC graphics cards, offering a wide selection of powerful 3D accelerators. You'll also see a smaller selection of other graphics products: TV-tuner cards, videoconferencing equipment, and video-capture cards.

www.sharbor.com

Safe Harbor specializes in digital video, animation, graphics, and multimedia tools. The selection includes video workstations, video-capture cards, and software for music and video professionals.



Safe Harbor

shopper.cnet.com

The **CNET Shopper** search engine takes the guesswork out of finding a deal on hardware, software, and accessories. The price-drop-alerts feature will send you e-mail when the cost of a coveted gadget falls. (CNET Networks is *Computer Shopper's* parent company.)

sparco.com

Looking for that something extra? Check out **Sparco.com's** list of products that come bundled with "free stuff." The site stocks more than 130,000 products, and it offers a list of discounted items for students and faculty members of academic institutions.

ssdonline.com

At **State Street Direct,** shoppers will discover a huge selection of computers and imaging products. Digital-camera shoppers will find many items of interest, including customized comparison charts.

staples.com

Yeah, they've got that. **Staples'** Web site offers a liberal price-matching policy on computer accessories, software, and office supplies. If you order similar items often, you can set up personalized shopping lists. The company can occasionally take its time shipping items out to you, though, so beware.

store.palm.com

Put a personal digital assistant in the palm of your hand. Here's where **Palm** sells its popular PDAs, plus software, accessories, and replacement parts. Reconditioned and discontinued models are available at a significant discount.

superwarehouse.com

SuperWarehouse.com stocks printers, monitors, hard drives, scanners, digital cameras, and laptops. The site's selection of printers is particularly large, and even includes plotters, dot matrix units, and other special-use printers.

suppliesusa.com

Feed your PC's ravenous appetite for media, ink, and other consumables at **Suppliesusa.com,** a distributor of brand-name printer and computer supplies. The catalog includes data-storage supplies, printer accessories, papers, and film.

tcwo.com

Thompson's Computer Warehouse Outlet offers only a small selection of computer products. You may find only a dozen monitors or four CD-ROM drives, but the prices are fantastic.

techstore.com

TechStore.com offers hardware in dozens of categories and highlights monthly top sellers. The site also sells software, ranging from productivity suites to children's titles.

thenerds.net

With no misgivings about the tech-savvy of its company or customers, **TheNerds.net** offers 60,000 computer products, ranging from cables and connectors to graphics cards, at its fast and friendly site. The liberal 30-day return policy will protect you from getting stuck with the wrong product.

SITE REVIEWS

TigerDirect

tigerdirect.com

TigerDirect's site offers 50,000 products, including computers from Compaq, Gateway, and IBM. Up for a little adventure? Order a build-it-yourself custom PC kit, and let the fun begin!

triocomputers.com

TrioComputers.com offers an impressive array of computer accessories and configure-your-own PCs. Read the site's 10-step tutorial on building your own PC to see if you're up to the challenge.

tristatecomputer.com

You'll have three times the fun at **Tri-State Camera and Computer.** The selection includes digital and analog cameras, computer peripherals, and home/office necessities, all with a money-back guarantee.

warehouse.com

The three "warehouses" under **MicroWarehouse's** roof sell PC hardware, Mac products, and datacomm components. The site accepts corporate, educational, and government accounts, and offers business leases on several of its products.

Direct PC Vendors

adamant.com

Adamant Computers' desktop and notebook systems are backed by a three-year warranty and lifetime technical support. Systems are highly configurable, including your choice of AMD and Intel processors.

www.alienware.com

Alienware can build you a gamer's dream machine, high-performance workstation, or desktop video system. Cases are available in a rainbow of out-of-this-world colors.

buyabs.com

Exceptional customer support on custom-configured desktop and notebook systems is the goal at **ABS**

Computer Technologies. All systems include a 30-day money-back guarantee. Some units are available with Linux preinstalled.

buy-atlas.com

Atlas Micro offers desktop PCs built around Pentium, Celeron, and AMD processors. Buyers can use drop-down menus to create a custom configuration and are protected by a reasonable 30-day return policy.

compaq.com

Three arms of **Compaq Computer's** site offer computers for everyone. See the Compaq AtHome division ***(athome.compaq.com)*** for home and home-office systems, DirectPlus ***(www.directplus.compaq.com)*** for business PCs and servers, or the Compaq Factory Outlet Superstore ***(www.compaqfactoryoutlet.com)*** for big bargains.

cyberpowerinc.com

Each **CyberPower** PC includes a three-year warranty and 30-day money-back guarantee. The site's service area includes downloadable drivers and lifetime tech support.

dell.com

Dell Computer's electronic storefront has always led the way in ease of use. The site is jam-packed with detailed information that makes it a snap to match a machine to your needs. Each system is configurable to the nth degree via drop-down menus, and you can get quick access to online support customized for your PC.

Online Auctions

auctions.amazon.com

Amazon.com Auctions is an easy-to-use person-to-person auction site. In addition to auction categories, which range from antiques to real estate, Amazon's zShops serve up fixed-price deals.

auctions.cnet.com

At **CNET Auctions,** a site dedicated to computer-product auctions, you can bid on the hardware and software listed, or put any computer items you'd like to sell on the block. Well-defined categories make items easy to locate. (CNET Networks is *Computer Shopper's* parent company.)

auctions.yahoo.com

Yahoo's popular user-to-user auction site will tempt you with hundreds of thousands of items in diverse categories ranging from computer hardware to motorcycles. Collector clubs and message boards let sellers and buyers talk, ask questions, and trade items.

ebay.com

With 600,000 new auctions every day, **eBay** is the quintessential Web auction arena. The site is packed with unique services: All purchases are insured up to $200, and the Billpoint feature lets even occasional sellers accept credit-card and electronic-check payments.

haggle.com

Haggle Online is a user-to-user auction site with nearly 40 computer-related categories, small-business product and service auctions, plus "other stuff" auctions ranging from musical instruments to automobiles. Sellers will appreciate the free basic listings.

liquidation.com

Liquidation.com describes itself as a complete solution for business surplus. The site helps companies buy and sell excess inventory and idle assets—from computers to car parts to construction supplies.

ubid.com

uBid's business-to-user auction house sells an array of products including computers, electronics, housewares, sports items, and jewelry. If you can't wait to learn if you've won, click on the Auctions Closing This Hour link.

SITE REVIEWS

www.fujitsu-pc.com

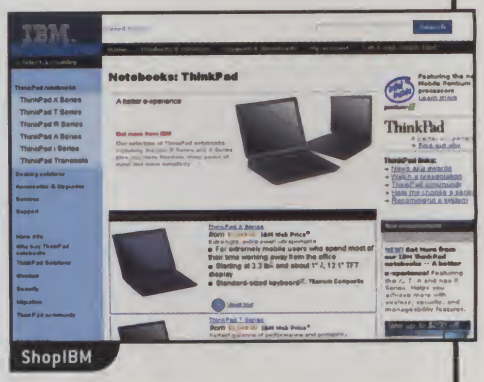
Fujitsu's site focuses on portable computing, including notebook PCs and pen-based tablet computers. Each computer includes several warranty options. A trade-in program offers cash back on your old computer when you upgrade to certain models.

gateway.com

One of the biggest players in online computer sales, **Gateway** has an enormous and informative site that sells custom-built desktops and portables. Check out the Deal of the Week and rebate center.

hpshopping.com

At this site, **Hewlett-Packard** sells its lines of desktop and notebook computers, handhelds, PDAs, digital cameras, scanners, and printers. The site makes repeat purchases simple for businesses and individuals.



ibm.com/products

ShopIBM sells business and home PCs, notebooks, servers, thin clients, networking equipment, and peripherals. The build-to-order option allows buyers to customize a new desktop.

idot.com

From low-cost budget models to powerful monster machines, **iDot** carries customized desktop and notebook computers and offers a fair return policy.

microexpress.net

Micro Express offers built-to-order desktop and notebook computers featuring AMD and Intel processors. Each system includes a 30-day guarantee and a two- or four-year warranty. Business leases are available.

micronpc.com

One of the largest direct PC vendors, **MicronPC** sells computers to home-office users, larger businesses, government buyers, and buyers outside the United States. The Factory Outlet offers refurbished and discontinued systems.

SITE REVIEWS

nutrend.com

Custom-configure a home or business desktop PC at **NuTrend Computer Products.** The company stocks machines running your choice of Intel or AMD processors. Each system comes with a three-year warranty.

www.polywell.com/onlinestore

Polywell Computers may not be a household name, but the company offers desktops, notebooks, workstations, and servers that are worth a look. You'll find massive custom-configuration options.

sagernotebook.com

Specializing in notebook computers, **Sager** offers a variety of options, from budget machines to speedy multimedia units. Service includes a 72-hour repair-turnaround guarantee and lifetime free tech support. Business leases are available.

shopprostar.com

Each computer in **ProStar Computer's** line of notebook PCs is backed by a 30-day money-back guarantee, a speedy-repair promise, and free tech support.

shoptoshiba.com

The Web home for **Toshiba's** stylish portables and desktop systems doesn't offer as many build-to-order options as some other sites, but it's loaded with plenty of extended-warranty and lease options.

sonystyle.com/vaio

SonyStyle is a sleek-looking site selling Sony's line of VAIO desktops and notebooks, plus digital cameras, displays, and storage devices.

store.apple.com

Apple Computer's well-designed site allows you to custom-configure any Macintosh computer and offers a wide array of Mac-compatible software and accessories. Beware the one-click ordering feature, however—using it may be a bit too convenient for impulse buyers!

unitedmicro.com

Take home a preconfigured Intel- or AMD-based PC, or start with a bare-bones system and let **United Micro** install the components of your choice.

www.winbook.com

Focusing exclusively on portables, **WinBook Computer** offers machines with a 30-day money-back guarantee, a one-year warranty, and free technical support. Ironically, some of the site's best deals, the daily "Web specials," can only be ordered by phone.

<PC Resources

bizrate.com

BizRate.com shares customers' opinions of thousands of online sellers, including prices and on-time delivery stats. Click to the Special Offers section for rebates, discounts, and free-shipping deals at hundreds of merchants.

consumerreview.com

ConsumerReview.com helps consumers research products before they buy. The site provides more than 200,000 reviews and ratings for tech gadgets and products for the home, car, and kids.

dcresource.com

The **Digital Camera Resource Page** is an unbiased, comprehensive source of information for digital-camera buyers and owners. Shoppers can glean necessary info from the FAQ page, buyer's guide, message boards, and reviews.

dealnews.com

Deal yourself in! Updated daily, **Dealnews** is a fantastic buyer's guide that reports on low-price specials in Web stores. Check out sister site **Dealmac** for Mac-oriented gotta-haves, and **Dealram** for memory deals.

gomez.com

Gómez.com offers ratings and customer reviews of e-commerce sites in 30 categories, ranging from Web-based computer stores to drugstores, apparel vendors to online brokers. Check the ratings on ease of use, customer confidence, and cost.

www.linhardware.com

Will that sleek new laptop run Linux? Find out with the **ZDNet Linux Hardware Database,** where users share their experiences regarding which hardware's compatible with Linux—and which isn't. For the stuff that is, download the appropriate driver and put it to work. (ZDNet is owned by CNET Networks, *Computer Shopper's* parent company.)

lowendpc.com

Stretch the lifespan of that old computer. **Low End PC** focuses on budget computing tips, including running free operating systems and piecing together an inexpensive PC from parts. Sister site **Low End Mac** will help keep your older Mac ticking, too.

nextag.com

NexTag is a sophisticated buying service that can help frugal shoppers find the lowest possible prices on computer equipment, electronics, books, music, and videos. Entering your ZIP code allows NexTag to calculate shipping and tax for accurate pricing.

pchell.com

When computer glitches are driving you over the edge, visit **PC Hell.** The site will soothe your jangled nerves with virus-detection tips, help for avoiding upgrade traps, and instructions for removing annoying "spyware."

pdastreet.com

No matter which PDA you use, there's something for you at **PDAStreet.com.** This multifaceted site delivers reviews, software downloads, user tips, and classified ads for Windows CE, Palm, Visor, Psion, and RIM users.

resellerratings.com

Want a second opinion before you share your credit-card number with an unfamiliar online merchant? Check **ResellerRatings.com,** which provides customer evaluations of 2,000 online hardware vendors. Take reviews with a grain of salt: We've seen dozens of negative messages posted by one (very unhappy) person.

usbworkshop.com

USB Workshop is a friend to anyone in the market for USB components. You'll find specifications, user ratings, and photos for hundreds of peripherals, cables, and sundry USB contraptions. Explore the lists of most-popular and most-talked-about products, then zoom in on peripherals compatible with your favorite operating system.

<Software Sites

buypcsoft.com

Buypcsoft.com offers software for Windows PCs in categories from business management to voice recognition. It's an efficient site with a good selection and high ratings among previous and current customers.

chumbo.com

Chumbo.com's selection of PC and Mac software includes games, business software, kids' programs, and operating systems. You'll also find software for your TV—that is, a good selection of DVD movies.

compuexpert.com

If you crave games for your Mac or PC, stop by **Compuexpert.com.** The categories include racing simulations, sports games, strategy games, and adventure titles. Colorful descriptions and screenshots are given for most titles.

SITE REVIEWS

cws.internet.com

Stroud's Consummate Winsock Applications List is the ultimate one-stop download site for Internet software, including Web-development tools, browsers, and chat clients. You'll find comprehensive file lists, ratings, and extensive reviews. A free newsletter provides summaries of new software releases.

download.cnet.com

CNET Download.com will help you find shareware and free software, linking to thousands of PC, Mac, Linux, and PDA titles. Well-written newsletters and down-to-earth reviews help you to locate the perfect program. (CNET Networks is *Computer Shopper's* parent company.)

dragon.ca

Next time you get an itchy trigger finger, visit **The Dragon's Den.** The site sells a gaggle of games for the PC and video-game consoles. Although the games are in Canada, prices are available in both U.S. and Canadian dollars, and shipping is reasonable.

ebgames.com

EBgames.com is a game-player's paradise, selling new and preowned titles for PCs and every game console under the sun. The site's new EB1 service lets users with broadband Internet access rent PC games online.

EBgames.com

Bargain Software

arcamax.com

Most software at **ArcaMax** costs $7.95 and includes free shipping. Entertainment titles lead the pack, but you'll also find business, lifestyle, and reference applications.

cdromsoftware.net

CDROMSoftware.net is a no-frills site touting new software for the budget-minded buyer. Most titles range from $4 to $15. There's a no-returns policy, so avoid hasty buying decisions.

free-cdsoftware.com

Free-CDSoftware.com serves up 100 mainstream software titles for Windows and Macintosh at a flat cost of $7.50 per title, shipping included. The site also sells inkjet cartridges for $9.50. Order early—shipping can take two to three weeks.

freewarefiles.com

Welcome to the land of the free. **FreewareFiles.com** is an index to free downloadable software. Categories include games, MP3, business, and Internet tools. Check out buzzworthy software in the Editor's Picks and Hot Downloads areas.

myfreesoftware.com

You have two ways to buy at **MyFreeSoftware.com:** Pick through the free-software bins (and pay $4.87 shipping per title), or buy a prepackaged software bundle. Bundle themes include business productivity, family, and extreme gaming.

www.999central.com

The price is right at **999central.com**, which stocks 100 software titles, each for $5, shipping included. A small selection of discount DVDs is also available.

softwarecheaper.com

The games, kids' software, education titles, and lifestyle applications at **Softwarecheaper.com** start at $3, and shipping is free. For every $10 you spend, you'll earn a free CD.

softwareoutlet.com

Plug into **SoftwareOutlet.com,** a veritable virtual bargain bin. You'll find dirt-cheap apps, including older versions, titles from defunct companies, and just plain funky stuff, for as little as $1. You can even find mainstream titles such as Microsoft Office at bargain prices.

jumbo.com

Jumbo is a fitting name for this monstrous file archive, featuring programs for sale, demos, shareware, and freeware. Jumbo Guides offer articles on backing up, sharing MP3s, and other computing topics.

www.tucows.com

It's not just bovine bliss: **Tucows** is also an incredible archive of freeware and shareware. Plenty of local mirror sites keep downloads speedy. The category list and reviews make finding the software you seek a breeze.

Tucows

wiredlounge.com

Here's a site hard-core gamers will want to plug in to. **WiredLounge.com** serves up oodles of recently released games. The site is packed with refreshingly honest reviews, plus plenty of screenshots to leave you wanting more.

zdnet.com/downloads

You'll need more bandwidth. Download shareware, freeware, and demos from **ZDNet Downloads.** The site offers daily software highlights and quick links to the week's most popular software. Every program is rated, reviewed, and checked for viruses, so your new software won't come with any unpleasant surprises. (ZDNet is owned by CNET Networks, *Computer Shopper's* parent company.) ▼